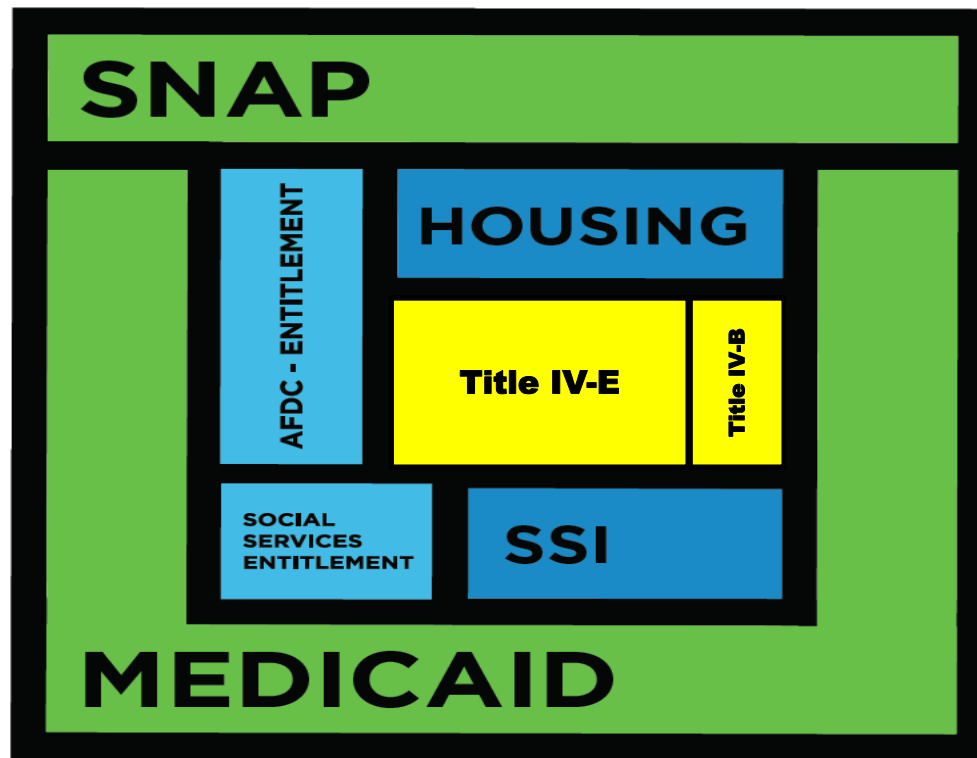


THE FEDERAL CONTEXT:

How is the disintegrating safety net impacting states trying to provide for our most vulnerable children and families?

We need a whole social safety net to support needs of vulnerable populations...

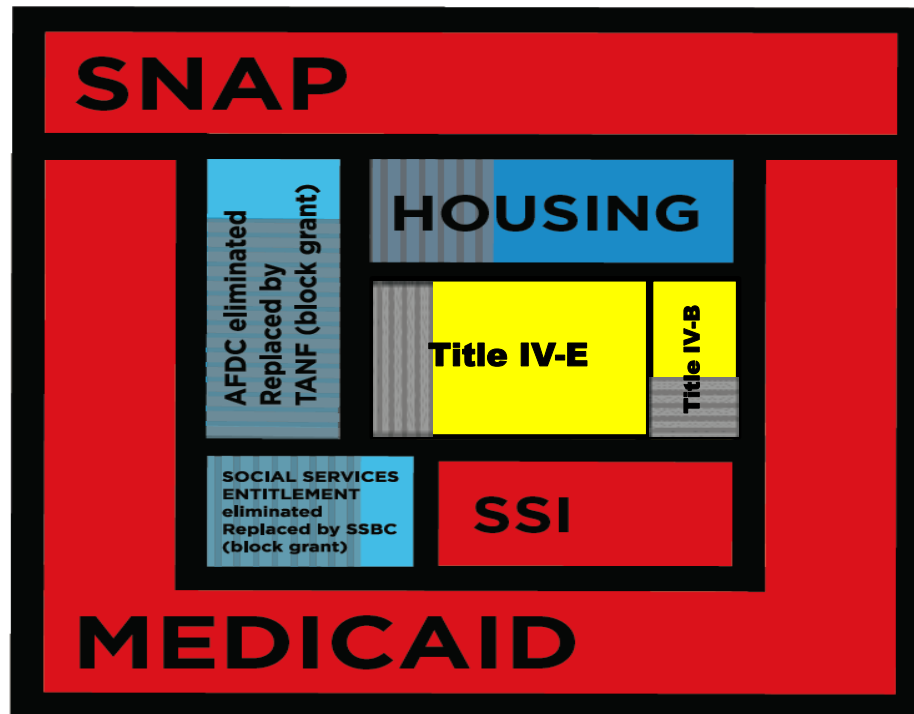
PAST



A WHOLE SAFETY NET

...but we have an increasingly disintegrating and threatened federal safety net

TODAY

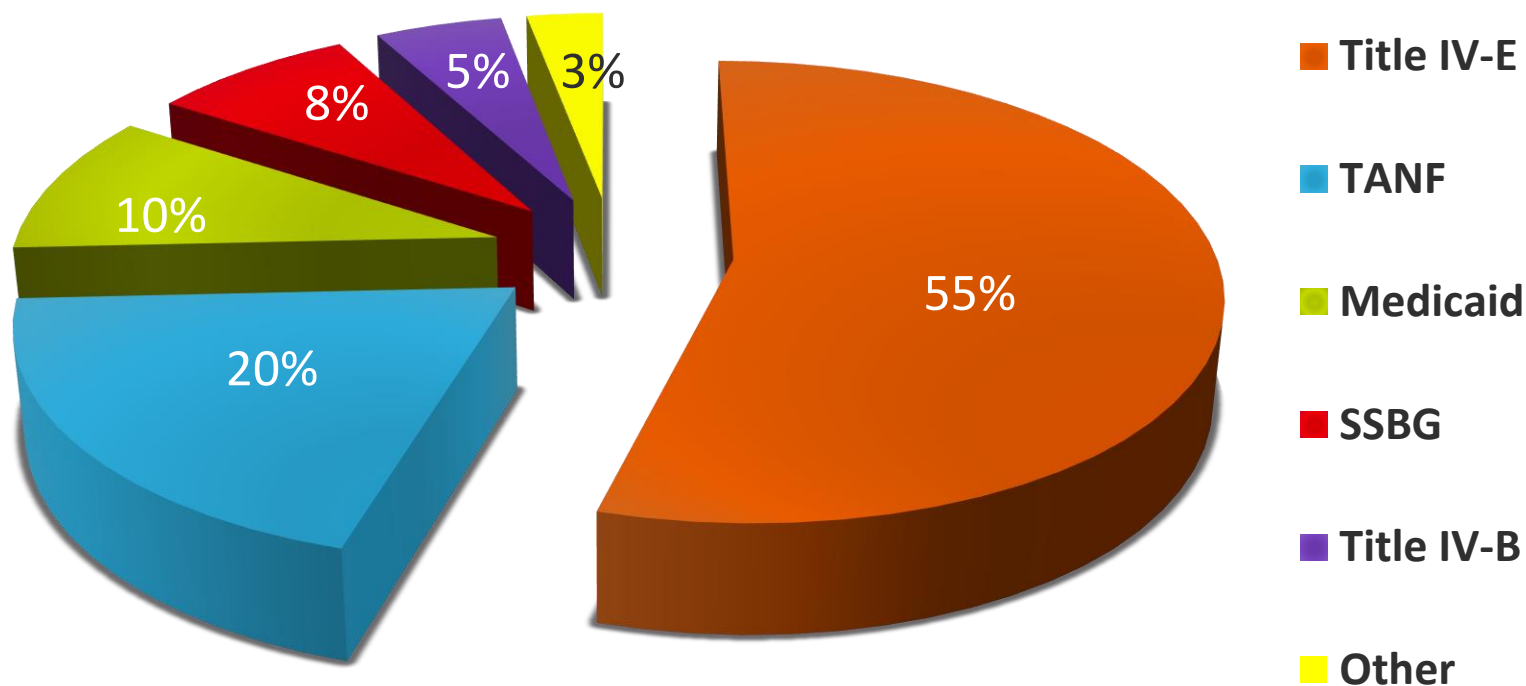


A TATTERED SAFETY NET

 under threat  defunded

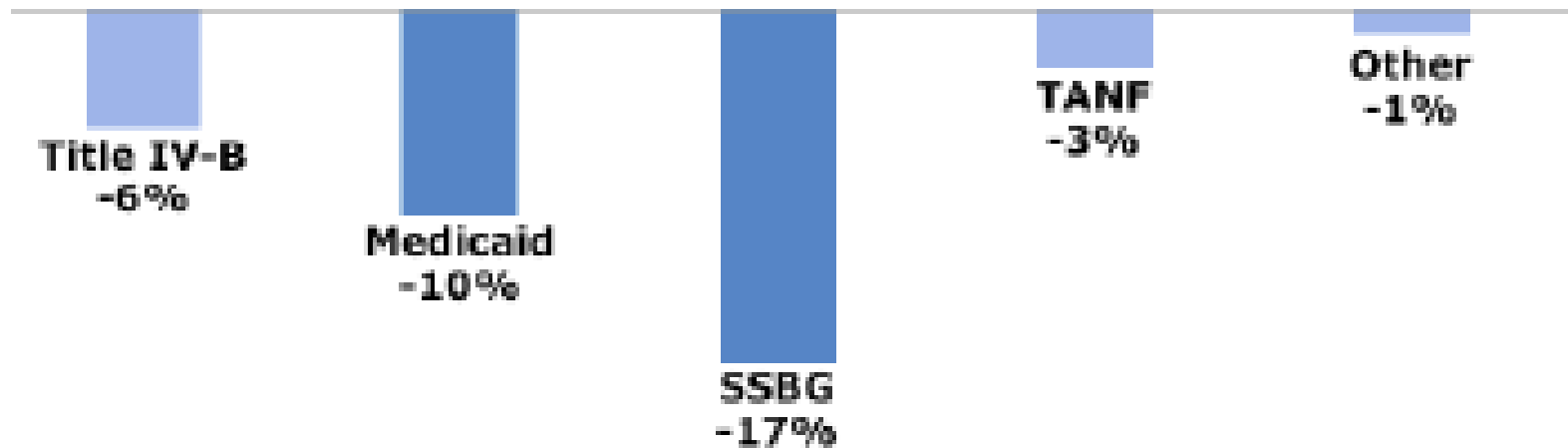
Many sources of federal funds that make up the general safety net also actively support Child Welfare

Federal sources of national Child Welfare spending



However, there has been significant disinvestment by federal government in our foster children

Change in federal child welfare spending between SFY2012 to SFY2014 by source



Federal Title IV-E funds spent on child welfare have **decreased 16%** since 2004

- Pressure on TANF, other sources not dedicated to child welfare
- Lookback to 1996 eligibility criteria for Title IV-E means there are fewer Title IV-E dollars available to states every year

Title IV-E, the largest source of funding, supports children in and out of formal Foster Care

Title IV-E funds a broad range of programs and services:

- ✓ Foster care maintenance payments
- ✓ Extended foster care (up to age 21)
- ✓ Adoption assistance (for children adopted out of foster care; de-link being phased in)
- ✓ Subsidized guardianship (for relative guardians)
- ✓ Administration (case planning/management, support for “candidates” for foster care)
- ✓ Training (foster or adoptive parents, relative guardians, caseworkers, court personnel)



Complex, outdated rules mean fewer children are eligible for federal foster care funding each year

Federal funding eligibility

To receive **FEDERAL foster care benefits**, the children **must meet the 1996 AFDC criteria in the home of removal** in the month of removal or one of the six months prior to removal:

- In 1996, California income limit for a family of three **to qualify for AFDC was \$723**
- **BY CONTRAST:** Income limit for the **SAME** California family **to qualify for cash assistance today is \$1,169**

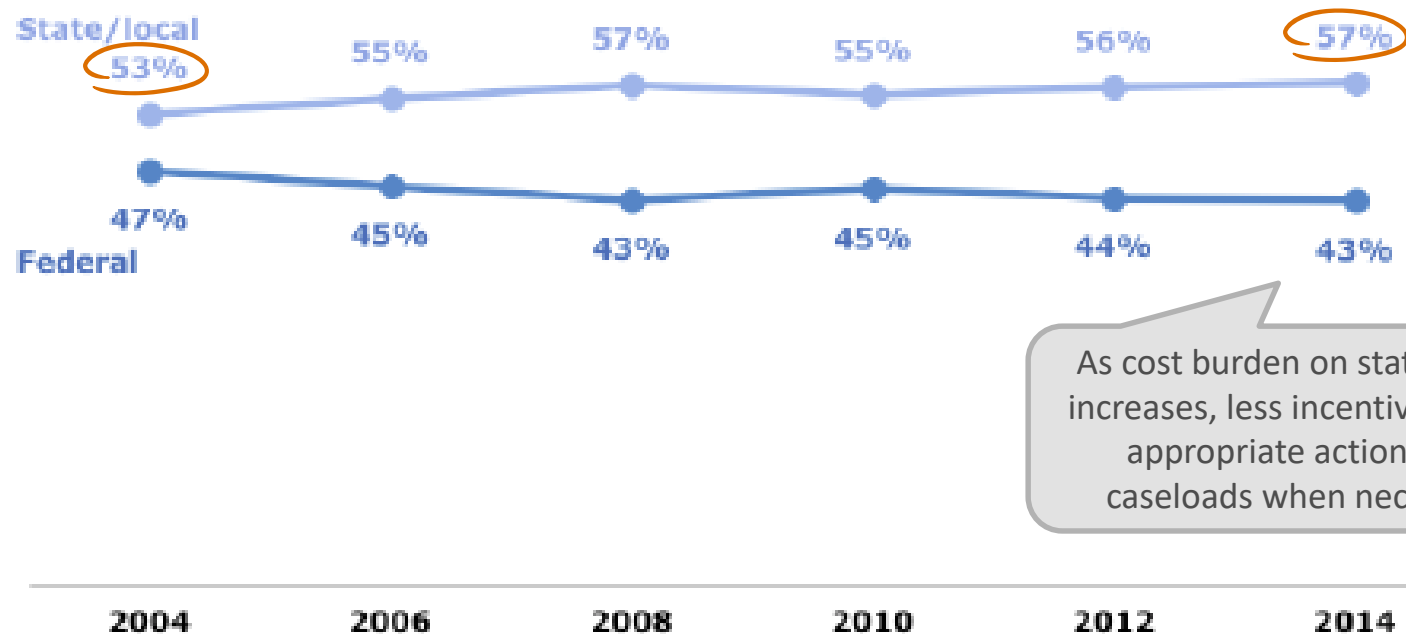
What that means

A child can be removed from a parent receiving welfare benefits and **STILL** not qualify for federal foster care benefits...

... **BUT** Federal test **has nothing to do with the needs of the child** or the needs of the relative where the child is placed

This has resulted in increasing financial burden on state and local governments

Federal vs. State / Local spending share on child welfare, SFY2004 to SFY2014 (30 states with comparable data)



As cost burden on state / local increases, less incentive to take appropriate action with caseloads when necessary

It's clear that current federal financing structure possesses significant shortcomings

Advocates agree on shortcomings...

- ✗ Declining IV-E eligibility due to **antiquated income limits**
- ✗ **Capped funding sources** for prevention and early intervention and reunification
- ✗ Overall federal funds decreasing over time resulting in **increased reliance on state/local funds**
 - FY14: 57% state/local funds, 43% federal funds

...but no consensus on solutions



Some believe **giving states more flexibility** in how they use IV-E dollars is sufficient...

...others believe the system needs an **infusion of new resources**

Possible impacts of disintegrating safety net on vulnerable children and youth



*Use of kin placements
without providing
adequate funding and
support*



*Lack of community
placements and
overreliance on
congregate care*

Impact outside of
formal foster care

Impact in formal
foster care

States divert most abuse and neglect cases away from entering foster care...

In 2014, **79% of the 702,000 children** who were found to be abused or neglected after a hotline call and investigation **did not enter foster care**

What did state child welfare agencies do for these children and families?

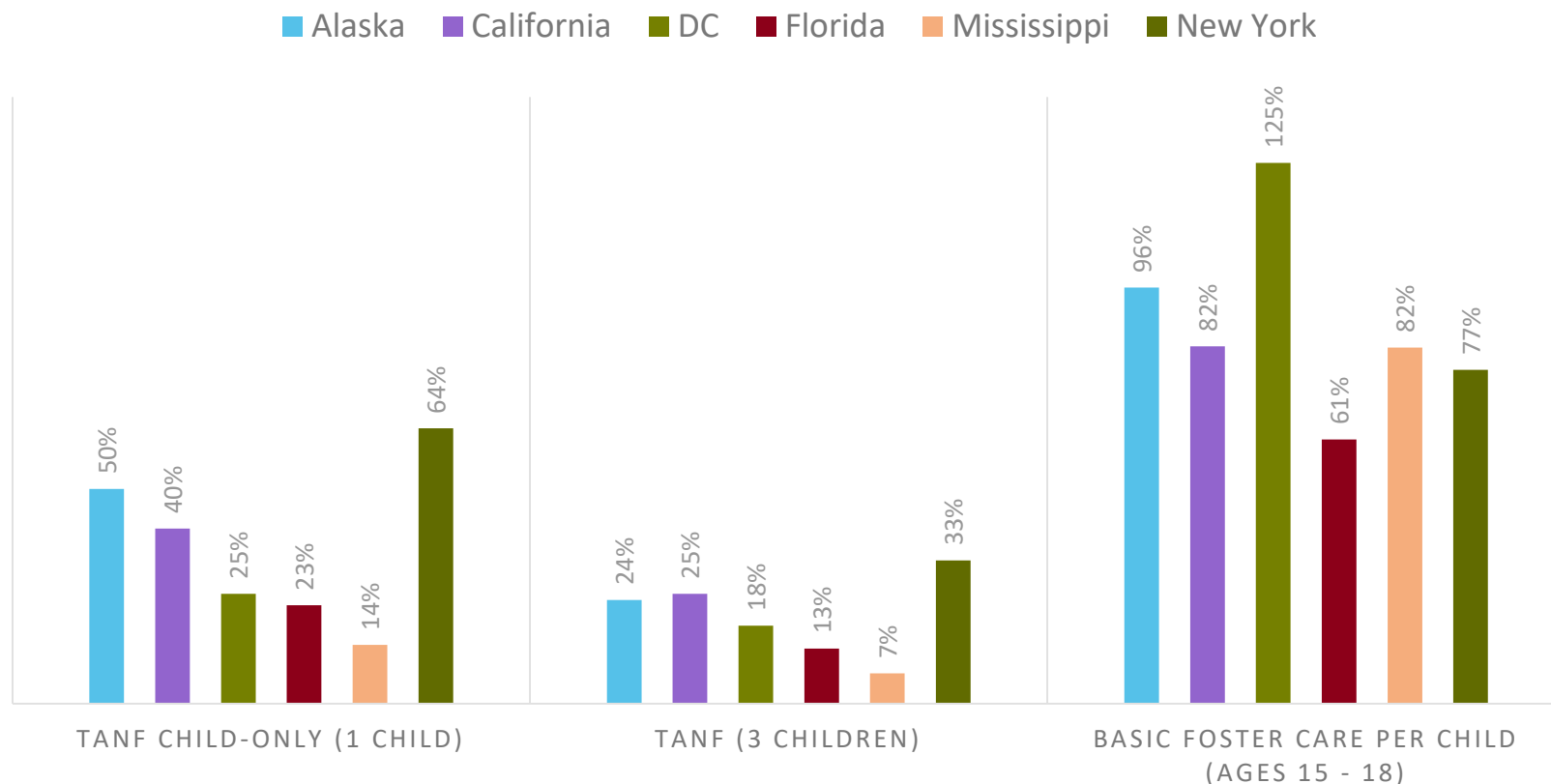


- Offer voluntary in-home services
- Offer voluntary short-term placement with relative or foster parent plus services to family
- Divert cases into informal kinship care

Family-support services or informal kin used for majority of child abuse and neglect cases

Many States Rely on TANF to Support Children in Kinship Placements: In and Out of Foster Care

TANF child-only vs. TANF 3-child grant vs. Basic Foster Care Rate as a % of Estimated Cost of Providing for the Needs of a 15-18 Year Old



Source: 2011 data from GAO Report. Foster Care Payments are from the Annie E Casey Report and the data is from 2011. The monthly cost of care is estimated in the same Annie E Casey report using 2011 data.

Additionally, disintegrating federal safety net further erodes support to kin caregivers



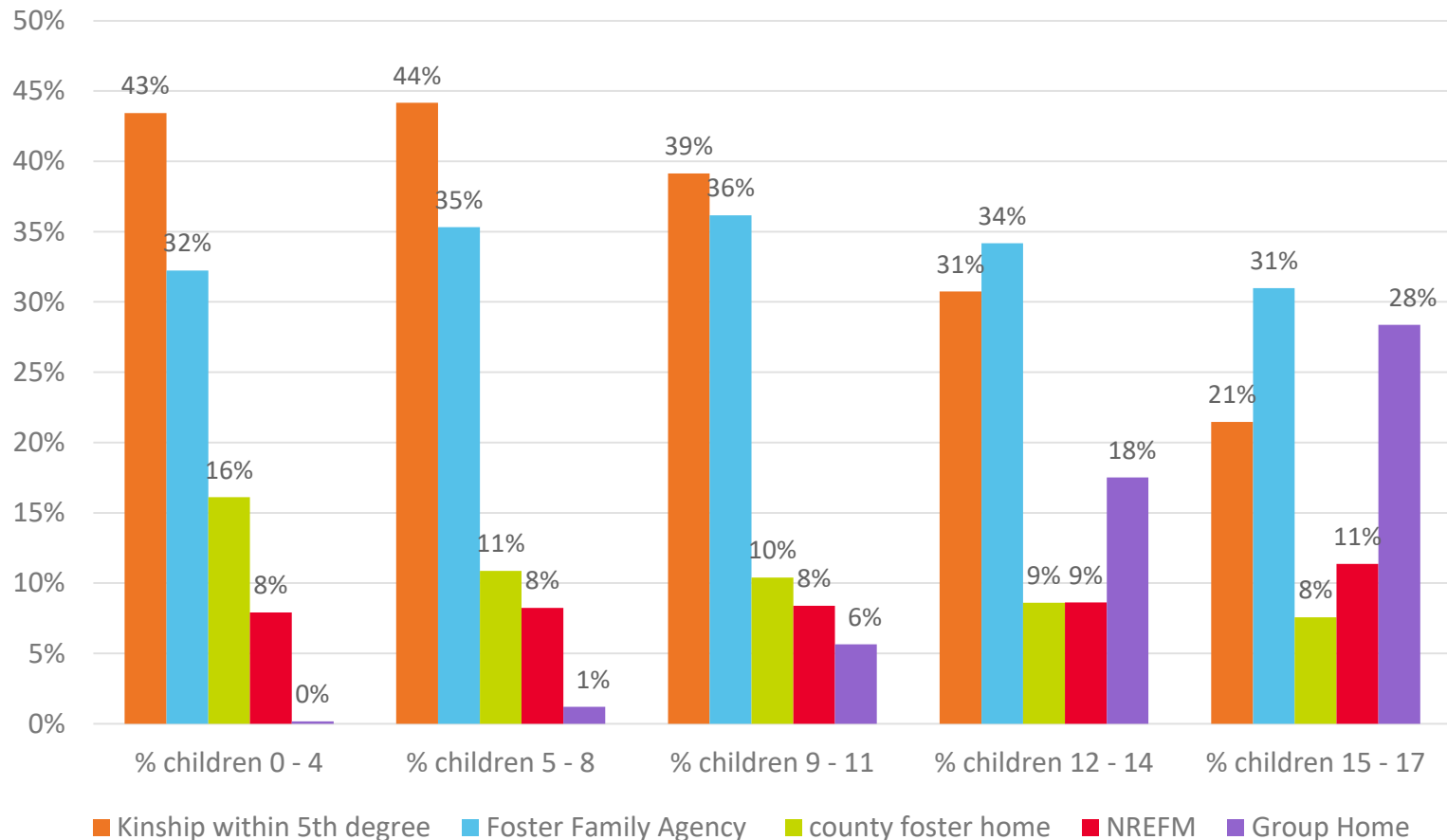
Children placed with kin fare better...

...BUT kinship caregivers are “substantially less likely than foster caregivers to receive financial support, parent training, peer support groups, and respite care”

- Less than **12%** receive TANF (nearly 100% are eligible)
- **42%** receive SNAP benefits
- **42%** of children in kinship receive Medicaid (nearly 100% are eligible)
- **17%** of low-income working kinship families receive child care assistance
- **15%** of low-income kinship families receive housing assistance

It is increasingly more likely for 13 – 17yr olds to be in group home despite overall decline in use

% of foster youth by placement by age



Reliance on congregate care is associated with poor outcomes for children and youth



- ✗ **Significantly increased risk of arrest**
(*Hernandez, 2008*)
- ✗ **Higher rates of re-entry** into foster care after reunification than those reunified from family-based care
(*Barth, 2002*)
- ✗ **Less likely to graduate** and more likely to drop-out of school than children and youth in family-based care
(*Wiegmann et al, 2014*)

CALIFORNIA RESPONSE: RE-WEAVING THE SAFETY NET

Continuum of Care Reform

- All children live with a committed, permanent and nurturing family with strong community connections
- Services and supports should be individualized and coordinated across systems and children shouldn't need to change placements to get services
- When needed, congregate care is a short-term, high quality, intensive intervention that is just one part of a continuum of care available for children, youth and young adults
- Effective accountability and transparency drives continuous quality improvement for state, county and providers

Investing in Family Placements: Emergency Caregiver Support

- Funding available from the time of placement
- Equal to the basic foster care rate
- Enables children to be placed immediately with family with appropriate support and services to meet the child's needs

Investing in Family Placements: Foster Parent Recruitment, Retention and Support

- \$145 million in investments in foster parent recruitment and retention over past 4 years
- Investments in the development of specialized foster homes to serve higher-needs youth

Investing in Family Placements: Bridging the Timing Gap for Child Care Assistance



Emergency Child Care Voucher

- Provided immediately upon placement
- For up to 6 months



Child Care Navigator

- Facilitate use of the emergency voucher
- Work with the family to transition or stabilize the child in a long-term, high quality, licensed child development setting

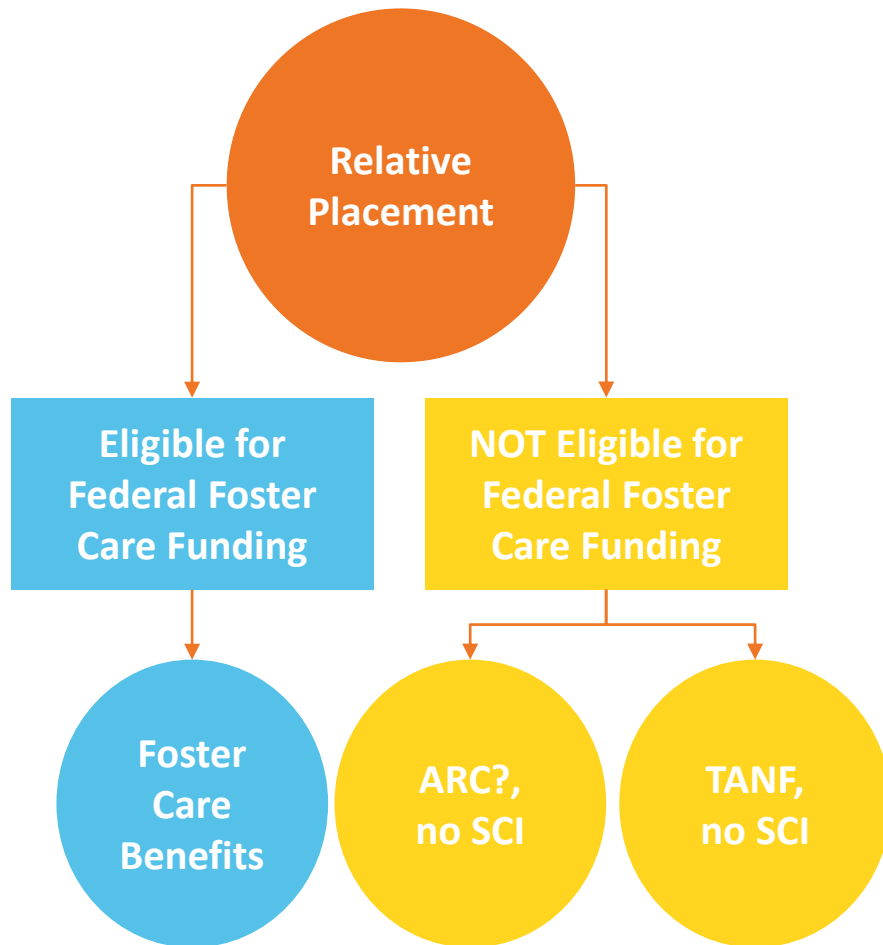


Training in Trauma-Informed Care

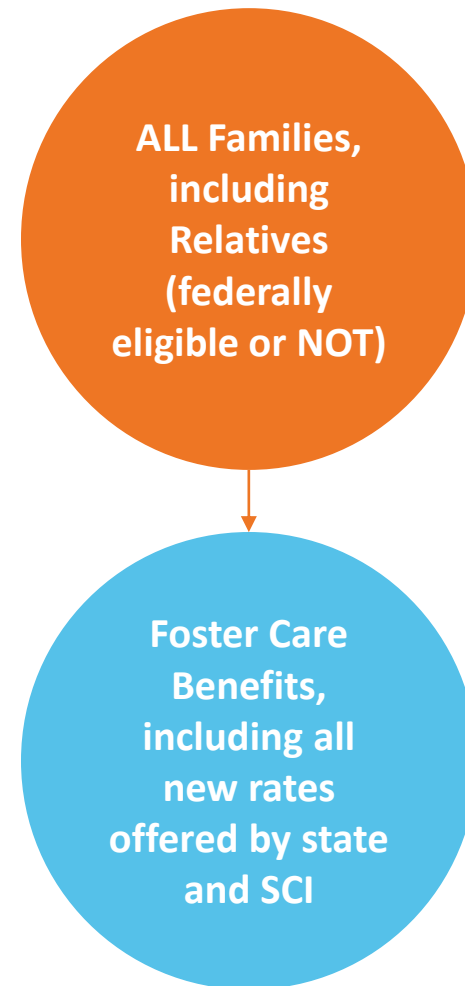
- Support and training in the area of trauma-informed care for child care providers

Investing in Family Placements: Child-Centered Foster Care Payment for All Families

Old Rate System



Child-Centered Rate System



Extended Foster Care

- Foster youth will be able to **maintain a safety net of support while experiencing independence** in a supervised living environment
- Provides youth extended time as “non-minor dependents” to **obtain educational and employment training opportunities** which assist youth in becoming better prepared for successful transition into adulthood and self-sufficiency
- **Recognizes the importance of family and permanency** for youth by extending payment benefits and transitional support services for the AAP and the Kin-GAP Program

Supports for Transition Aged Youth

- Developed specialized housing for youth over the age of 18
 - Supervised Independent Living Placement
 - Transitional Housing Placement Program for NMDs
- Increase amount of the infant supplement to support Expectant and Parenting Youth
- \$4 million expansion to the Chafee education and training voucher program and an increase in the upper age of eligibility from age 22 to age 26

THE WORK AHEAD

Expanding Housing Options for NMDs

Areas of Need

- Inadequate housing supply
 - Insufficient beds to house youth in extended foster care (including emergency housing)
 - Insufficient supports for youth with specialized needs (e.g., youth with disabilities and parenting youth)
 - Overutilization of SILPs
- Inadequate resources
 - Foster care payment does not cover initial rental costs (e.g., security deposit)
 - Youth forced to navigate private rental market without support

Housing Options for NMDs

- **Potential Solutions**

- Develop a **continuum of transitional housing options**, including supportive housing for youth with special needs and family housing
- Develop **sufficient emergency placements** for youth who re-enter extended foster care or experience a disruption
- Create or leverage funding (e.g., Rapid Re-Housing) to **cover initial costs of accessing private rental market**, such as security deposit, utilities, and furniture
- Utilize **housing navigators** to build relationships with landlords in high-rent/low-supply markets and help youth learn how to be informed, responsible renters

Expansion of Child Care Bridge Program

- Child Care Bridge programs does not guarantee access to child care
- Need to continue to expand the Child Care Bridge program to ensure that families can accept placement of children into their homes without the barrier of access to child care

Benefits Assistance Prior to Exiting Care

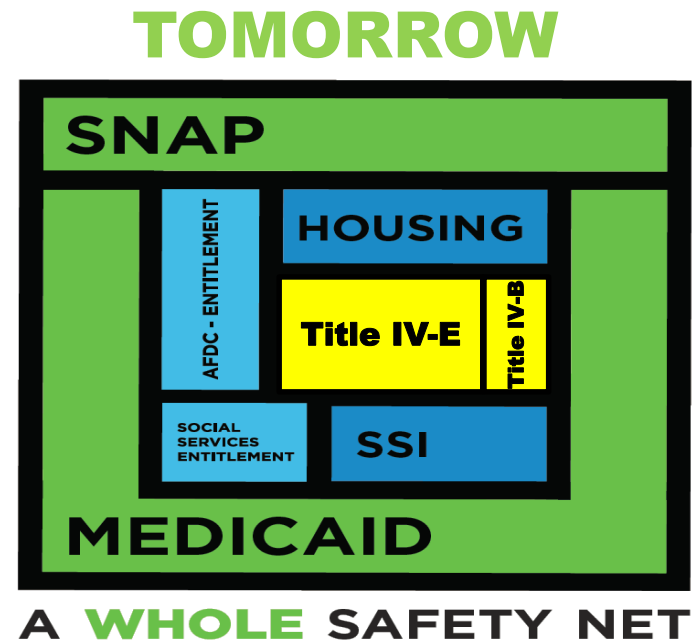
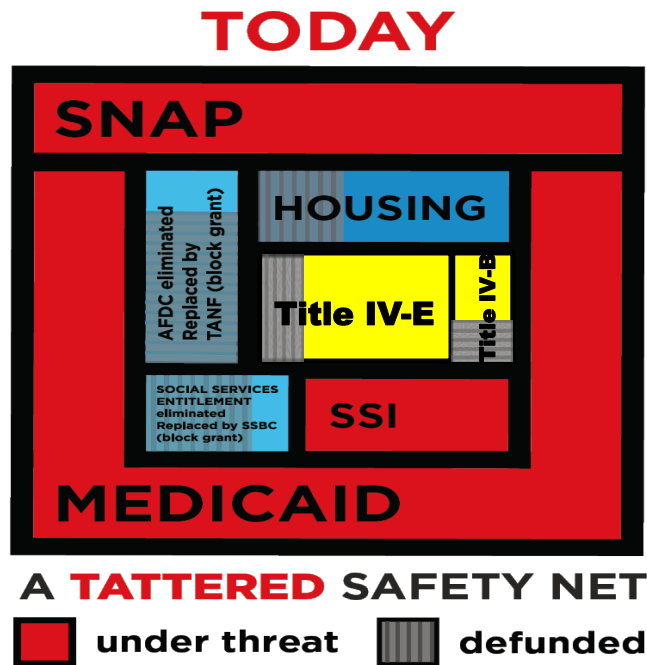
Areas of Need

- **SSI, CalFresh, CalWORKs, Medicaid, housing assistance:** Ensuring youth are screened for eligibility and assisted in applying for vital benefits programs.
- Delays in screening and applications, as well as lack of expertise, result in too many youth with disabilities leaving care without SSI benefits in place

Potential Solutions

- Train social workers, FFAs, the court, and those who work with caregivers, around how and when to pursue SSI, who is responsible for doing so, and how to use existing resources to submit a high-quality application to support youth with disabilities
- Ensure all counties have a universal screening and application process in place
- Encourage collaborations between counties and local legal service organizations to partner on SSI advocacy and appeals

Through reform we can create a **comprehensive safety net system**...



...that **better connects youth and families to the services and supports they need** to thrive